



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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J. TYLER McCaULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

March 7, 2006

TO: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – SHAMROCK
COTTAGE, INC., SHAMROCK COTTAGE GROUP HOME 3 AND
SHAMROCK COTTAGE GROUP HOME 4**

We have completed a review of Shamrock Cottage Group Home 3 and Shamrock Cottage Group Home 4 operated by Shamrock Cottage, Incorporated. The Agency contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Shamrock Cottage Group Home 3 and 4 are each six-bed facilities, which provide care for girls ages 13 - 17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Shamrock Cottage Group Home 3 was providing services for five Los Angeles County Probation children. Shamrock Cottage Group Home 4 was providing services for six Los Angeles County Probation children.

Shamrock Cottage Group Homes are located in the Fifth District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Deficient areas that the Agency needs to address include:

Shamrock Cottage Group Home 3 needs to ensure that children are assessed for needed services within the first thirty days of placement.

Shamrock Cottage Group Home 4 needs to maintain a current Needs and Services Plan for each child; develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include specific and measurable goals; and obtain appropriate court authorization for children who are taking psychotropic medication.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached), which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:jdh
http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Paul Higa, Chief Probation Officer
Barbara Luna, Executive Director, Shamrock Cottage, Inc.
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Shamrock Cottage, Incorporated
Shamrock Cottage Group Home 3
2287 North Forbes Avenue
Claremont, California 91711
Phone: (909) 626-8502
License Number: 197800088
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Shamrock Cottage Group Home 3 is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. However, children are not consistently assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include long and short-term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

1. Shamrock Cottage Group Home management ensure that children are assessed for needed services within the first thirty days of placement.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Group Home management, there are currently no children receiving psychotropic medication. This information is appropriately documented. Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

**Shamrock Cottage, Incorporated
Shamrock Cottage Group Home 4
1206 San Antonio
Pomona, California 91766
Phone: (909) 394-0902
License Number: 197804765
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Shamrock Cottage Group Home 4 is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. However, NSPs are not current or comprehensive, and do not include long and short-term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations**1. Shamrock Cottage Group Home management:**

- a. Maintain a current Needs and Services Plan for each child.**
- b. Develop comprehensive NSPs that are specific, measurable, and include long and short-term goals.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. However, there was not appropriate court authorization for one child who is taking psychotropic medication.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

- 2. Shamrock Cottage Group Home management obtain appropriate court authorization for all children who are taking psychotropic medication.**

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

Shamrock Cottage

163 W. Bonita Ave, Unit A, San Dimas, CA 91773

State License # 197804492

(909) 394-0902

(909) 394-0907 Fax

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

Shamrock Cottage Group Home #3
2287 Forbes Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711

Recommendation:

Shamrock Cottage Group Home to ensure that children are assessed for needed services within the first thirty days of placement.

A meeting with the Facility Managers, Administrator, was conducted and verbal directives were given to the facility managers indicating the necessity of our residents needs being met within the first 30 days of placement. As a result, Shamrock Cottage has contracted with Dr. Stephen M. Levine to make a monthly regular scheduled visit to our facilities and conduct a medical exam of our residents. If there are any emergencies the residents will be taken to the Pomona Valley Hospital and we also utilize Molina Medical Centers in Pomona for the resident's medical needs. There remains a considerable problem with the Probation Department in obtaining the residents Med-i-cal information in a timely fashion. The Facility managers start placing the call to Probation upon the immediate placement of the residents to assure receipt of this information in a timely fashion. The administrator is to follow up with the facility managers to assure that this is occurring.

Shamrock Cottage Group Home #4
1206 N. San Antonio
Pomona, CA 91767

Recommendation:

- a. Maintain a current Needs and Services Plan for each child
- b. Develop comprehensive NSP that not e specific and measurable objectives

A meeting with the facility Therapist, Director and Licensed Supervisor was conducted to stress and assure that all paperwork specifically the Needs and Services Plan is prepared for each resident within the specified time limits. For the Needs and Services Plan it was decided that the therapists would use the Acronym **SMART** when preparing the NSP. The Goals are to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and given a Time limit.

Recommendation:

Shamrock Cottage to obtain appropriate court authorization for children who are prescribed psychotropic medication.

The court authorization for the resident who did not have it in her file was obtained with the appropriate signatures. The administrator of the house, Ms. Mildred Flowers was responsible for this task and also conducted a meeting with the house manager to assure that everyone involved is aware of the need to have the paperwork before giving out any medication. The administrator is to monitor the files to assure that all paperwork is correct.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Barbara Luna".

Barbara Luna
Executive Director